

Henry A. Dike House
101 Prospect Street
Providence
Providence County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-250

HABS
RI,
4-PROV,
147-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. RI-250

HENRY A. DIKE HOUSE

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Address: 101 Prospect Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island. Plat 10, Lot 399.

Present Owner
and Occupant: Mrs. Helen Metcalf Danforth.

Present Use: Dwelling.

Brief Statement
of Significance: This is an example of a large, elegant house of the
1860's. It has been the home of several locally
prominent people including Albert Harkness,
Stephen Metcalf, and the present owner.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Original and Subsequent Owners:

- 1853 Sarah Halsey sells for \$24000 to Henry A Dike 2 certain lots of land on Prospect Hill on the N/ly side of Lloyd Street and are lots #59 and #60 on Plat 2 of the Halsey Estate, Plat Book #2... Deed Book 134, page 343, in Providence City Hall.
- 1861 Oscar D Dike sells to Henry A Dike 2 certain lots of land on the E/ly side of Prospect Street...being Lots #57 and #58 on Plat 2 of the Halsey Estate the same being conveyed to the grantor by John Ord Creighton in 1850 together with all tenements and hereditaments...Deed Book 158, page 427, in Providence City Hall.
- 1863 Henry A Dike sells for \$18,000 to Thomas A Randall 4 certain lots of land with a DWELLING HOUSE, said lots laid out and designated as lots #57, 58, 59, and 60 on Plat 2 of the Halsey Estate Plat Book #2 page 22 said lots together are bounded: N by Lloyd Street 208' 10"; W by Prospect Street 101' 10"; S by Philip Allen 190';...said #57 and #58 were conveyed to me by Oscar D Dike and lots #59 and #60 were conveyed to me by Sarah Halsey...Deed Book 165, page 179, in Providence City Hall.
- 1865 Thomas A Randall sells for \$28,750 to Alexander Hodges the above property "with a Dwelling House and other buildings and improvements"...Deed Book 171, page 481, in Providence City Hall.
- 1870 Alexander Hodges sells for \$9,500 (subject to mortgage) to Albert Harkness 4 certain lots of land in the E/ly side of Providence being lots #57, 58, 59, 60 on Plat #2 of the Halsey Estate Plat, Book 2...said lots together bounded: N by Lloyd Street 208' 10"; W by Prospect Street 105' 11"; S formerly Philip Allen 190'; E 105' 11" being the same conveyed to the

grantor by Thomas A Randell in 1865...Deed Book 191, page 37,
in Providence City Hall.

- 1915 Clere (Harknees) Poland wife of Williem, and Albert G Harkness,
heirs of Albert Harkness sell to Esther P Metcalf wife of
Stephen O Metcalf the above property meaning to convey the
whole of lots #57,58,59 and the W/ly 34' from front to rear of
lot #60 on Plat #2 of the Helsey Plat, Card #65...being the
same (except the E/ly 16' from front to rear of lot #60) con-
veyed from Alexander Hodges in 1870 to Albert Harknees in
1870...Deed Book 553, page 72, in Providence City Hall.
- 1923 Esther P Metcalf sells the above property to Helen Metcalf
Danforth being the same as Deed Book 553, page 72...Deed
Book 645, page 5, in Providence City Hall.

B. Date of Erection: 1861-63.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey
for the Providence Preservation Society
May 1963

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a large, elegant frame house of the 1860's. Placed with its main entrance on the side rather than on the street, and with its large bay windows, it is more suburban in appearance than most houses in the area from this period, which are generally more severe in form and built of brick.
2. Condition of fabric: Very good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Main block about 40' (south front) x 30', two stories high plus 20' dining room wing on east.
2. Foundations: Brownstone ashlar.
3. Wall construction: Frame, covered with horizontal boards with "V" joints, 7-1/2" wide.
4. Porches, stoops: Two-story porch on east side of house. Wide brownstone entrance stoop, nine steps high.
5. Chimneys: Brick; one in west wall and two inside in east part of house.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Six-panel door; flat sunk panels, heavy moldings; side lights and semicircular top light with etched glass.
- b. Windows: Lights 14" x 23", double hung, six-light sash in single windows, two-light and four-light sash in bay windows.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Low hip roof, copper covering with standing seams.
- b. Cornice: Deep bracketed cornices.
- c. Dormers, cupolas: Small dormers with segmental arched roofs. Hexagonal cupola lights dome over circular stairway.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

- 1. Floor plans: Wide central hall with stairway, parlor on west side, study at southeast part of main block, dining room on east, service rooms on northeast.
- 2. Stairways: Open circular stairway to second floor with domed skylight; open string, single turned baluster per step. Faceted, newel, molded rail, heavy proportions. Open scroll step ends.
- 3. Flooring: Narrow hardwood strip flooring, laid in patterns in places.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster. Deep molded plaster ceiling cornices. Ceilings about 12' high. Dining room probably redecorated: walls paneled; more elaborate cornice with dentil course and delicate fascia; marble mantel with delicate patterning.
- 5. Doors and doorways: Six-panel doors. Heavy molded, mitered doorways.
- 6. Trim: Sliding interior shutters on windows
- 7. Hardware: Silver plated hardware.
- 8. Lighting: Electric. Crystal chandelier in parlor.
- 9. Heating: Central with radiators. Marble mantels.

D. Site:

1. Orientation and general setting: House at southeast corner of Prospect Street and Lloyd Avenue. It is on the sidewalk on the west and north sides. The main entrance and facade are at the side, facing south, with a garden to the south and east. The lot slopes slightly down toward the east.
2. Enclosures: Wood fence.
3. Outbuildings: Garage at basement level, attached to east side of house, accessible from Lloyd Avenue on the north.
4. Walks: Brick walk to front door; gravel walk in garden.
5. Landscaping, gardens: Very well tended; informal garden.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby
Yale University
May 1963